Rail Link between Sundargarh to Jharsuguda

4027 KUMARI FRIDA TOPNO : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to connect the District Headquarters Sundargarh with the rail line from Jharsuguda;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this direction and the time schedule for completion thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Constraint of resources.

Committee on Wildlife Protection

4028 SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any Committee had been appointed under direction of the Delhi High Court and the Committee had made several recommendations for protection of the wild life;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to implement these recommendations;

(d) whether there is also any proposal to amend the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Important recommendations of the Committee submitted to the Delhi High Court are given in the statement enclosed.

(c) As desired by the Delhi High Court an affidavit has been filed by this Ministry giving comments on each of the recommendations to the Delhi High Court. The matter is now subjudice.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) An interstate committee has been set up to review the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and to recommend necessary changes to make its implementation more effective.

STATEMENT

Important Recommendations Made by the Committee on Wildlife Protection

1. Create a separate Ministry for Natural Resources (Forests and Wildlife).

2. Indian Board for Wildlife should be given statutory backing, the Executive Director, adequate powers, funding the secretariat in the proposed Ministry of Natural Resources (Forests and Wildlife).

3. All State Wildlife Advisory Boards must be constituted and must meet regularly. Honorary Wildlife Wardens must be appointed.

4. Create wildlife wings in Indian and State Forest Services.

5. Ensure all Indian Forest Services as well as State Forest Officers, Foresters and Forest Guards receive wildlife training which should be specialised for those operating for the Wildlife Wing.

6. Implement S.K. Roy report on tourism and Subramanian Committee report along with further suggestions of this report.

7. Increase India's Protected Area network to 7.5% by 2000 A.D.

8. Divide India into five wildlife zones and have action plans for each with implementation at zonal/state level.

9. Create Wildlife Protection Schemes for wildlife residing outside the P.A. network.

10. Better implementation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes like Rhino Protection Plan etc. is needed.

11. Protected Areas should be given more autonomy to utilise funds.

12. Institute incentive and award schemes and other welfare measures for field staff.

13. Improve scientific research and integrate it to field management of wildlife.

14. Improve anti-poaching measures.

15. Establish intelligence gathering network for control of poaching and wildlife trade.

16. Improve legal support system to control wildlife crimes.

17. Control illegal trade in wildlife derivatives by designating special courts, establishing intelligence gathering networks, exchange of information, associating other enforcement agencies.

18. Take steps to harmonise relationship of forest communities with wildlife.

19. Take steps to reduce human and livestock pressure on critical wildlife habitats.

20. Harness revenue from low impact tourism to conservation and community development.

21. Reduce pressure of urbanisation of economic development on wildlife habitats.

22. Improve education and awareness for wildlife protection.

23. Create new Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks.

24. A minimum of 15% of total forestry budgetary should be earmarked for wildlife management. Both financial and other resources have to be enhanced.

25. Wildlife field staff should have the same status as that of para military or armed forces.

26. Additionally there are detailed recommendations on proposals to amend Wildlife (Protection) Act in Chapter 6.

Leasing out of Railways Land

4029. DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a plot of Railway land measuring about 38 bighas was leased out to Pandu College, Guwahati;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a portion of the said plot is under the unauthorised encroachment;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the steps being taken to remove unauthorised encroachers and to hand over the possession of the encroachment free plot of land to the college authorities; and

(f) the time by which the possession is likely to be handed over to the college authority?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b). No, Sir. However, Railway land measuring 38 bighas was relinquished to the State Government of Assam with the ultimate objective of the land being transferred to the Pandu College Authority;

(c to (f). Since the Railway land in question has already been relinquished to the State Government, Railways are not concerned.

Catering Services

4030. SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether catering services in A.P. Express and Dakshin Express are provided by private contractors at major stations/junctions on the routes of these two trains;

(b) whether these trains do not carry pantry facilities to provide on-board catering services to the travelling public including the VIPs;

(c) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government are contemplating to award catering contracts to provide food at major stations to the Railway Department itself instead of the private contractors; and

(e) if so, the time by which positive decision in this regard is likely to be taken and also to make it mandatory to carry pantry-cars on these trains regularly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c). Catering Services are provided in both the trains through pantry cars. The pantry car in A.P. Express is run departmentally while in Dakshin Express by a private contractor.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Disruption in Train Services

4031. SHRI ANIL BASU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the train services to and from Howrah Station of the Eastern Railway suffer due to water logging on the Railway line at Howrah Car Shed; and

(b) if so, the remedial measures taken to ensure that the train services are not disrupted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Train movement is occasionally hampered in instances of intense rainfall/flooding near Howrah Car Shed, within Howrah Yard.

(b) In such abnormal situations the water is pumped out for removing water logging and allow easy movement of trains.

Extension of Railway Line

4032. SHRI VISHESHWAR BHAGAT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Steel Authority of India has proposed the extension of Delhi-Rajhara Railway line to Raughat for transportation of iron ore from Raughat to Bhilai Steel Plant; and

(b) if so, the latest position in this regard indicating the proposed outlay and the length of the proposed railway line?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.